

Dear Sen. Winder,

In your capacity as a member of the Federal Lands Interim Cmte. I am writing to urge you to issue a favorable report back to the Body of the Whole on Transferring our Public Lands back to the state of Idaho where the ownership and control of our state lands properly belongs. I testified before the Committee and submitted written statements as well to previously urge this support.

The transfer is way overdue and has been delayed by the federal government for over a century via artifice, usurpation and arrogant assertions of power in the states far outside of its Constitutional powers. I have found the opponents to the transfer to engage in constant fear-mongering, hyperbolic assertion and out-and-out fabrication to block the transfer and the introduction of a Bill demanding the return of those lands to our people and the state,

This issue has enormous consequences to Idaho remaining a Free and Independent state with a growing and free economy for our children and grandchildren for generations to come. In researching the law and the history I have not found a single legitimate reason for the federal government to continue to retain control of 62% of our state using specious arguments, misdirection of historical precedent and usurpation of the Constitution via contrived "Law" and legal artifice. I find the paternalism, useless over-regulation and control by federal agencies and bureaus to be repulsive and harmful to our state on many levels socially, economically, culturally and political, without even getting into the fiscal control issues of federal spending within Idaho. We are nothing more than an economic serf to the large state. New York, which has 0.3% federal lands within its boundaries controls far more of our land use decisions, through its congressional delegation, than do the citizens of Idaho.

One of the fundamental definitions of a "free and independent state" is control of the land within its legally defined boundaries. I would note for the Committee that not ONE STATE of the European Union relinquished a single acre of their land as a condition of joining their Union. How is it in our Union, which so many hold out as "more free than Europe," that so many states of the Western United States control less than 50% of their own territory? How is that "more free?" When one asks a Frenchman or a Belgian or German of their primary allegiance, none reply, "to Europe." They reply, "to France" or "Belgium" or "Germany."

The Founders were not confused about the nature of our Union. Each one looked to their native state as their country first. President Washington always referred to himself as a "Virginian." Robert E. Lee gave up his Commission in the Federal Army to return to Command the "Army of Northern Virginia" because he felt he was a Virginian first and that's where he owed his allegiance, even though he regretted doing so when the Union split.

I am an Idahoan first and foremost. The issue of the Transfer of Public Lands is a fundamental issue of state sovereignty, economic freedom and of our destiny as a free and independent state in a Union of free and independent states. If we are ever to have economic and political autonomy to pursue our interests as a people and a nation-state among all the states of the world, and of the 37 states that control 95% or more of their own land, we first have to obtain our freedom and control of our own destiny.

I urge all members to vote a favorable report and to educate the Body of the Whole on the absolute need to ACT to regain control of our own state lands for ourselves and our posterity. The issue is right and the time is now to stop being 2nd class citizens in the Union.

Respectfully submitted,

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